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PROFESSOR and Congressman Seelye's book on "Christian Missions" is to be published immediately by Dodd & Mead in a 12mo of 300 pages. It consists of six lectures delivered with great success before the theological students at Yale and Andover, but is not less effective as a popular exposition of the benefits of Christian missions. Prof. Seelye takes strong ground that the tendency of the race, left to itself, is one of degeneracy, and he asserts that, to civilize the world, it must be Christianized. It is a strong book, and ranks well with such works as Drs. Storrs' and Hall's, lately published by this firm. They have also ready George MacDonald's new book, "A Double Story."

"THE Keys of the Creeds," which applies the doctrine of evolution as the explanation of present religious beliefs, is just ready at G. P. Putnam's Sons, and is sure to attract very wide attention. It is a remarkably readable book, so simple is its style, and is curiously in contrast with "The Unseen Universe," which is enjoying a very good sale.

SCRIBNER, WELFORD & ARMSTRONG have a new volume by Ruskin—a series of readings from "Modern Painters," which work he declines to republish in full. It is made by a friend of the author—"the younger lady of Thwaite," as he curiously calls her—but has been arranged by him, and supplied with notes, in which he combats some of his own earlier positions. The book is curious as an example of his ideal bookmaking, as it was made under his directions. It is bound only in brown French morocco, flexible covers, with a single gilt line on the front close to the edge and the most simple of lettering on its squarely-made backing, and we must say it is a gracious relief from the prevalent over-ornamentation.

THE Scribners publish immediately Marion Harland's "Breakfast, Lunch, and Tea," which is likely to sell by the ten thousand; Headley's book on the Adirondacks, which is just in time for the hosts who will throng there this summer; and "The Science of Praise," an admirably comprehensive service and hymn book, with music, for the use of any church which has no denominational ritual.

"THE Better Self" is now ready at Porter & Coates', and, if it have anywhere near the popularity of the author's earlier work, "The Gentle Life" (which in England has reached its 21st thousand), will have a wide and quick sale. J Hain Friswell is the author. The same house has also in press for early publication, "Oldbury," by Annie Keary, and a translation by M. S. of "At Capri," by Carl Detlif (Miss Clara Bauer)—the two forming vols. 12 and 13 of their International Series of Novels.

"OCEAN Born," completing the Yacht Club Series, is Oliver Optic's latest, and, with Mr. Kellogg's "Wolf Run" (the second of "The Forest Glen Stories"), is the current addition to Lee & Shepard's juvenile publications. A third work also now issued by them is a volume of essays, by William B. Greene, containing "Socialistic, Communistic, Mutualistic, and Financial Fragments."

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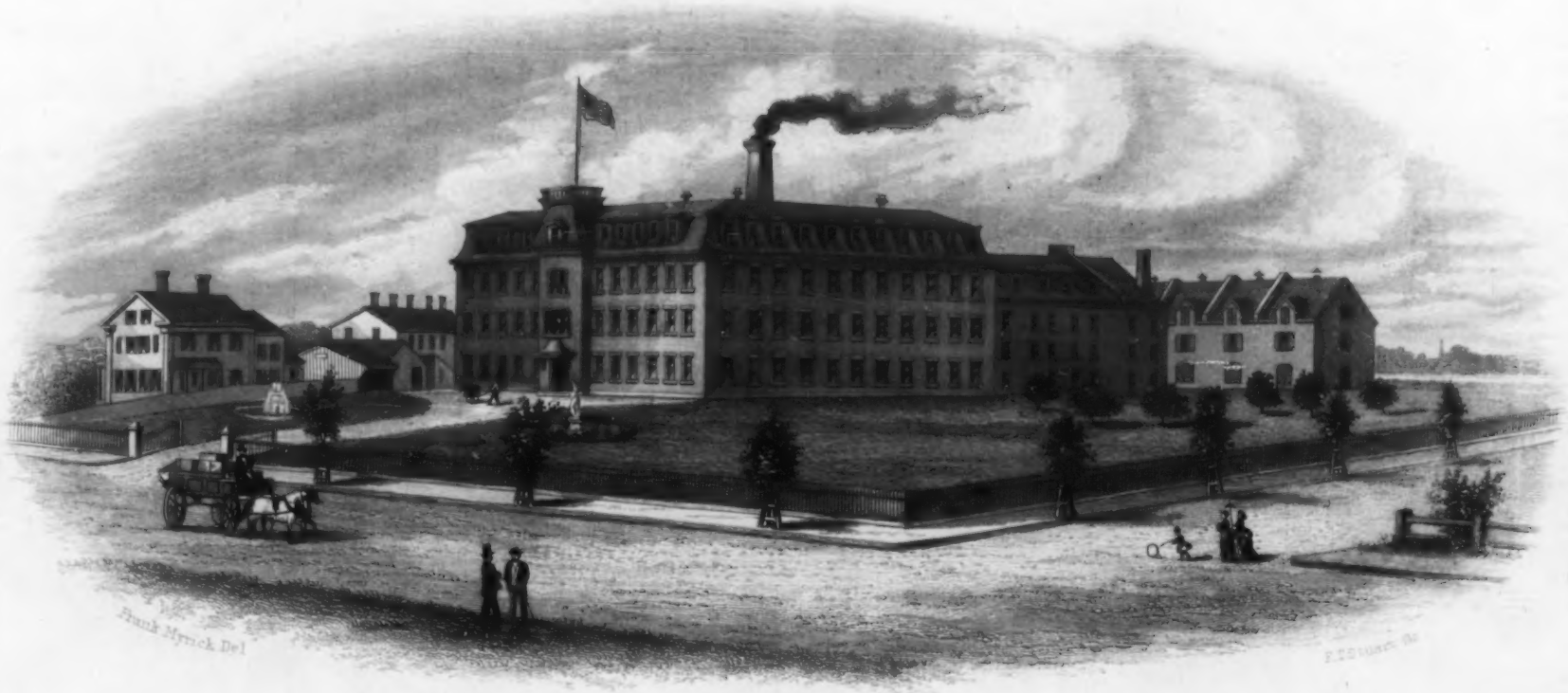
The Vital Question.

It is not to be forgotten that, after all, the one question before the trade, the vital matter for the action of the Convention, is underselling and how to stop it. All others that come up are of importance chiefly as they bear upon this. That is the pith of platforms, and the key to the situation. What the trade wants is a thorough agreement, on the most practical basis, that selling books at ruinous prices shall be stopped. It can't be a trade, in any lasting sense, except this new state of things be somehow brought about.

The extreme competition consequent on the falling off of business and of prices in most trades since the war, has resulted in the offering of many classes of goods to the retail buyer at or close to their actual cost to the dealer. This is all very fine at first sight to the public, but sooner or later somebody has to pay for a deficit, and it is after all the public. The retail dry goods trade, for instance, on the west side avenues in New-York,—in which some have been offering books at ruinous prices as a bait for buyers of other goods,—are advertising goods at actually "bottom prices"; the very men in the trade who sell them the goods can not understand how they offer them so low. Many of these prices seem to ignore entirely such inevitable items as rent and running expenses, which must be a part of the cost of goods as they are sold, so that there is actually no profit for a man to live on, or a definite loss which subtracts from his capital. Now a man who is in active business can carry a chronic loss, by managing his credits, for a certain time; but, especially if he is doing a large business on small capital, as is now the fashion, he must sooner or later come to grief. Then the public must pay his losses. Suppose he fails at 25 cents in the dollar; the creditors have to pay 75 per cent of their credits to him for the recklessness with which they had helped him into bankruptcy, and this loss is by the inevitable law of political economy ultimately transferred to the business public at large. Mrs. B. has been congratulating herself on buying her new dress a dollar cheaper at some of these undersellers; but by-and-by Mr. B. perhaps is to lose his $500 by the failure of this underseller, or of the creditors he has dragged down with him. As a business system, it is all rotten, rotten, rotten, and the Amercan commercial world and the American public have to learn this to their cost sooner or later. Business can't be done on unsound principles without somebody or other getting hurt. This ruinous competition, begun by some one house to force trade, has wrought its natural results; every body has followed suit, the one who started is no better off, and there is no more trade *in toto* than there was before.

This is an example of the way it works in general business; the book trade is peculiarly unfortunate and fortunate in this respect because of the nature of its commodity. In most trades there is a natural protection to the local dealer, and the competition is limited to a narrow vicinage. But, as we have again and again shown, books being identical duplicates, the local book-dealer is pitted against the city undersellers, perhaps the great publishing house itself, and against them he has no chance at all. On the other hand, it is now decided by law that the publisher has a right to protect his prices,—an advantage in which the book trade has a superiority over most others. What the trade is aiming at is to convince the publishers that, in the first place for their own sake, as a matter of business safety, and in the second place in justice to the body of the trade, as a matter of business policy, they can not afford to give credit or to permit their goods to be sold to undersellers, or in any way to undersell themselves. The main thing is to bring the trade, the publishers in especial, into unanimous agreement on this principle and its practical application. We believe in the broadest application of it, in the most tho-



The Riverside Press

Cambridge, Mass.

rough-going platform that can be adopted by the trade; and any house, as we have reiterated, stands in its own light, and in the light of its customers and the trade, by setting itself against a reform which is simply a return to the only principles of business on which business can safely be done. Therefore we at once favor the Lippincott platform and deprecate the Messrs. Lippincott's action. We want the best we can get: that platform is to us the best, and we are sorry that the Philadelphia house has prevented the trade from getting as far toward it as was possible this past year.

Now, the next thing is the Convention. That is where the trade is to decide what is the best thing we can get. It expects to see there the representatives of our largest houses, as well as retail dealers from all parts of the country, to the number, it is hoped, of three or four hundred. It has the right to expect this, for it simply means that houses which are wide-awake to the trade movement know what true business principles are. That is to be a place, not for the insistance on any body's plans, but for the friendly consultation of all concerned as to what is best to be done. For that reason, we hope not to see private grievances brought to the Convention, or questions such as are involved in departments of the trade in which the general issue is not involved; but every body should come prepared to give their best thought and best help to the settlement of this chief issue.

WE may state that favorable arrangements have been made with the International Hotel, Niagara (as also with the Spencer and Cataract), the Tifft House, Buffalo, and the Grand Central Hotel, N. Y., for especially low terms to the trade during the Convention and the ensuing Exchange; that a special train will be run from Niagara to New-York between them; and that railroad arrangements are progressing so that we hope in a few days to announce the names of members of the trade at centres all over the country, who will act as agents of the Committee in furnishing information and certificates. But we must have the names of those coming. *Come to the Convention*, AND SEND WORD NOW THAT YOU'RE COMING!

The Riverside Press.

THE engraving which accompanies this number of the WEEKLY will give to our readers some idea of the face of an old acquaintance, whose name has appeared on well-printed books for a generation past. A recent purchase of land by the proprietors has enlarged the area of the establishment, so that it now occupies about four acres, extending to Charles River which flows behind, with streets on each of the other sides of the square. The buildings themselves are only partially shown in the engraving; they consis of one principal building for offices and the various departments of the manufactory, a large fire-proof warehouse for the storage of sheet stock and paper, a smaller fire-proof safe, wholly above ground, for the storage of stereotype plates, an engine-house and stereotype foundry, together with a number of dwelling houses for workmen, which stand within the inclosure.

The various departments contained in the Press are: 1. The Composing Room, with a large stock of type of the most approved cut, where men and women are employed upon all classes of work, of which law books, magazines, and privately printed books constitute an important part, and where a large corps of competent proof-readers is steadily engaged. 2. The Stereotype and Electrotype Foundry and Finishing Rooms, which, by their completeness of outfit in machinery and tools, enable the proprietors promptly to turn out durable and thoroughly finished plates. 3. The Press Room, containing a large number of cylinder, platen, and hand presses, adapted for all classes of work, from the finest wood-cut to an ordinary pamphlet or newspaper. 4. The Book Bindery, where every kind of binding is done, from that of a school-book in boards to an illustrated work in tree calf. While superior workmen are constantly engaged on fine bindings, chief attention is given to sheep and cloth work, both as regards the material used and the style of design, special artists being employed upon drawings for dies, and a thorough organization permitting large orders to be executed with great dispatch. 5. The Plate Printing Room, where steel-plate printing is carried on by workmen of long experience. 6. The Mailing Room, a well organized department for the distribution of the large editions of periodicals published by the firm, or manufactured and sent out by them on contract for others. 7. An important addition has just been made to the force of the establishment by the annexing of a large Lithographic Business, enabling the concern to undertake the execution of orders in the printing of maps, chromos, portraits, and all kinds of both plain and colored lithographic work.

The Counting Room occupies a portion of the front second story of the principal building. Here are the rooms of the proprietors, desks for the superintendents of the several departments, a library for the use of the work-people, who also have a well-established savings department, a telegraph station, safes for MSS., and communication with all parts of the building by means of bells and tubes. The people employed number between three and four hundred, and there is an organized fire department, frequently called out for practice with the hose which runs into every room.

The Riverside Press has a Boston office, recently fitted up, at the corner of Beacon and Somerset streets, and is represented in New-York at 13 Astor place by the resident partners here, Messrs. Hurd & Houghton.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The interests of the trade can not be better served, than by a full discussion by its members of all questions which affect it. Our columns are always open to communications on any such subject, provided they be brief and suggestive, and we cordially invite the trade to express any suggestions or opinions of interest or value in "Letters to the Editor."

Chronic Introductions.

ATCHISON, KAN., May 8, 1875.

To the Editor of the Publishers' Weekly:

Herewith I hand you slip,* received from one of our customers. Although not informed of the action of Convention of Booksellers last summer, and mistaking it for the publishers' reform movement, his remarks are pertinent, and I inclose them to you. Two years since, a certain series of books was introduced in his district, and even to this date they can be bought in the town at introduction rates. This is the case throughout this State to a great extent. A man to whom we sell stationery, recently offered us forty-five per cent on school stock, at ninety days. In looking into the matter, I find he gets from three different publishers their books for introduction in his and adjoining counties, and they are virtually kept on sale thereby, as he pays only when reported as introduced. Please call the attention of school-book publishers to this. Truly yours, H.

* "What action was taken by the Western Booksellers' and Publishers' Union at Put-in Bay last summer, in regard to the introduction of books in a district where they had already been introduced and are still in use? Twice in this district have books, already in use, been brought here for introduction, thus injuring the retail trade.—L."

Dollar-Store Privileges: Neither Wise nor Fair.

———, May 7, 1875.

To the Editor of the Publishers' Weekly:

DEAR SIR: I have just read your admirable article, "The Publisher's Power over Prices," which calls to mind a business transaction of recent date. When the business to which I lately succeeded was first started, a certain New-York publishing house refused, for five or six years, to sell their books at better than one third, unless one hundred volumes were ordered at one time. After a long struggle, my predecessors succeeded in convincing the publishers that it would pay them to sell us new books and old stock at the one hundred volume rate, because the house would, in the long run, sell more of their books, than to wait until a one hundred volume order could be made up (and get stuck). Lately they concluded to "go back" on the old contract, giving as their excuse that we were not selling enough of their stock. (Business, and books especially, has been slow during the last year, you know and they know.) But they will sell at one third. I can buy a $1.50 book, one at a time, published by this tight-discount firm, from our dollar-stores, at $1. And a week or two since, one of our customers, who wanted to purchase two hundred dollars' worth of books, found he could buy Dickens, Arabian Nights, and many others that he wanted, at the dollar-store for 95 c.; our price was $1.50, twenty per cent off. Will you please tell me how we can "reform" such publishers? Is it not plain to any sane publisher that the regular bookseller can not afford to buy one hundred volumes at a time at 90 c. when the dollar-stores can sell them at 95 c.? Booksellers should cry down such publishers' books as much as possible, and push other books. Why is it that the publications of Harper & Brothers are not on the shelves of dollar-stores, and yet the Harpers are about as successful and prosperous a publishing house as this or any other country can boast of? I have never heard of an instance where Harper & Brothers have offered their books to "outsiders" at a discount, and I have been in the business for many years; and the consequence is, I sell more of their publications than those of any other two publishers. Yours, G.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

RAPE OF THE GAMP, by C. Welsh Mason. (Harper & Bros.) A very motherly, bulgy, and shabby old umbrella is the "gamp" of this story; probably so designated from its resemblance to the one already celebrated in fiction as belonging to "Sairey Gamp." The author seems to have gone out of his way for a title, as the "rape" of this "gamp" has very little direct influence upon the action of the story. The story itself is a very good one, as the numerous readers of *Harper's Magazine* will testify. It contains some excellent sketches of life in a small English suburban town, and has the usual amount of love-making and marriages. 8vo, paper, $1.

THE ODD TRUMP. (E. J. Hale & Son.) A quiet, touching story, the chief scenes of it being laid in the old cathedral town of Gloucester. The author has aimed to write a story which should completely interest, and yet contain no assault upon morals or theology. We think he has succeeded admirably. 8vo, paper, 75 cents.

ALICE LORRAINE, by R. D. Blackmore. (Harper & Brothers.) Napoleon's campaign of 1812 forms the background of this novel. A young staff-officer of Wellington is intrusted with a large sum of money to carry to the starving British army. Infatuated by the beauty of a young Spaniard, he is untrue to his Kentish love, and false to his trust. The way in which an old Greek astrologer is mixed up in his affairs and comes to his rescue, makes the story read like a fairy tale. There is a vein of romance and improbability all through it, interwoven with so much that is real, that the novel possesses a peculiar charm. 8vo, paper, 75 cents.

THE MILLS OF THE GODS, by Mrs. J. H. Twells. (J. B. Lippincott & Co.) The finest portions of this novel are the descriptions of actual scenes which occurred in Paris during the siege of 1871. The "mills of the gods" are set in motion to overtake one Dyke Faucett, an unprincipled young Englishman, who entraps a young girl into a secret marriage

and then basely deserts her. Retribution is awarded him, however, sufficiently strong to satisfy the most exacting novel-reader; and his ill-treated wife lives through her sorrows to a long life of peace and happiness. 12mo, cloth, $1.50.

THE SATIRES OF A. PERSIUS FLACCUS, edited by Basil L. Gildersleeve, Ph.D., LL.D. (Harper & Brothers.) Out of two hundred and thirty-one pages of this handsomely gotten up volume, only twenty-six are taken up by Persius' satires. The rest of the work contains profuse and scholarly notes on the text, with a biography of Persius and an introduction to his works, and a "Critical Appendix," and an "Index." As will be seen, every possible aid is offered to the student. 12mo, cloth, red edges, $1.25.

THE WRECK OF THE CHANCELLOR, by Jules Verne. (James R. Osgood & Co.) As harrowing a story of shipwreck as one need wish to read, told in Verne's well-known style, through which his imagination, as usual, runs riot. In the "Saunterer's Series." 24mo, cloth, $1.50.

WE have received from the American Tract Society, "The Holly Boy," a juvenile work, 24mo, cloth, 25 cents; "Our Three Boys," by Sarah E. Chester, a book for boys, 12mo, cloth, $1.25; and a devotional work, "Morning Hours in Patmos," by Rev. A. C. Thompson, D.D. 12mo, cloth, $1.25.

OUR DETACHMENT, by Katharine King. (Harper & Brothers.) An English regiment quartered in a little county town in Ireland, with young and handsome officers ready for fun or flirtation to fill up the time, is the base of this story. Love affairs and incidents abound in it, there being no lack of beautiful and spirited Irish girls to second "our detachment's" efforts towards amusement. Parts of the novel are quite sad, and even tragical, and all of it worth reading. 8vo, paper, 50 cents.

BERTHA'S ENGAGEMENT, by Mrs. Ann S. Stephens. (T. B. Peterson & Bros.) Mrs. Stephens's numerous admirers will welcome a new novel from her pen. It possesses all the old vigor with no stint of sensational incidents. It is an American society novel, the principal scenes being located in New-England. 12mo, cloth, $1.75.

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As there is reason to believe the attendance will be very large, the Committee can not undertake to be responsible for the accommodation of any who do not comply with this request.

The special rates of fare to be obtained from the railroad companies will also depend somewhat upon the number whom it is ascertained will be present.

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